THE ADVENT

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The Advent

God's servant is something; God's slave is greater.

SRI AUROBINDO

The ADVENT

February, 1958

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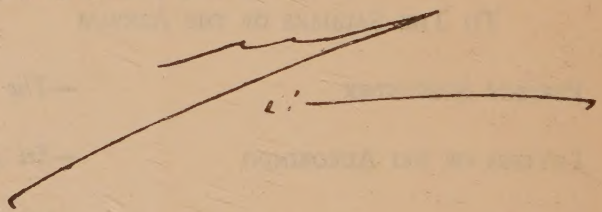
1958

O Nature, Material Mother,
thou hast said that thou
will collaborate and there
is no limit to the splendour
of this collaboration



FACSIMILE OF THE MOTHER'S HANDWRITING

1. *Sanskrit* (Isha Upanishad with translation in French by the Mother)
2. *Japanese*
3. *Hebrew*

ईशावास्योपनिषत्

हरिः ॐ।

ईशा वास्यमिदꣳ सर्वं यत्किंच जगत्यां जगत्।
Au Seigneur pour qui il l'habite, tout ici et chaque chose univers se mouvant dans l'univers mouvement

तेन त्यक्तेन भुञ्जीथा मा गृधः कस्य स्विद्धनम् ॥१॥
retirant de désirer toi et jouis - en aucun bien ne reconnaît pas qui appropriant les hommes ne convoite.

कुर्वन्नेवेह कर्माणि जिजीविषेच्छतꣳ समाः।
Faisant certes ici les oeuvres ici on doit désirer vivre cent ans

एवं त्वयि नान्यथेतोऽस्ति न कर्म लिप्यते नरे ॥२॥
ainsi pour toi et non autrement en est-il l'action n'englue pas l'homme.

असुर्या नाम ते लोका अन्धेन तमसाऽऽवृताः।
sans soleil appellent ces mondes enveloppés de ténèbres aveugles

ताꣳ स्ते प्रेत्याभिगच्छन्ति ये के चाऽऽत्महनो जनाः ॥३॥
où s'en ici parties vont ceux qui assassinent leur âme gens

अनेजदेकं मनसो जवीयो नैनद्देवा आप्नुवन्पूर्वमर्षत्।
Unique sans mouvement plus prompt les dieux mêmes ne peuvent l'atteindre dans la progression en avant

तद्धावतोऽन्यानत्येति तिष्ठत्तस्मिन्नपो मातरिश्वा दधाति ॥४॥
Cela dans sa stabilité dépasse tous les autres qui courent En cela les eaux Matarisvan établit

तदेजति तन्नैजति तद्दूरे तद्वन्तिके।
Cela est en mouvement cela est sans mouvement cela est lointain cela aussi est proche

तदन्तरस्य सर्वस्य तदु सर्वस्यास्य बाह्यतः ॥ ५॥
Cela au dedans de ce tout cela aussi hors de ce tout est

यस्तु सर्वाणि भूतान्यात्मन्येवानुपश्यति।
Mais celui qui partout les devenirs dans l'Etre perçoit

सर्वभूतेषु चाऽऽत्मानं ततो विजुगुप्सते ॥ ६॥
tous les devenirs dans l'être celui-là ne se replie plus.

यस्मिन्सर्वाणि भूतान्यात्मैवाभूद्विजानतः।
Pour qui avec toutes les choses devenues l'Etre même est devenu pour qui ainsi connaît

तत्र को मोहः कः शोक एकत्वमनुपश्यतः॥ ७॥
pour qui vit douleur ou tristesse ? Unité perçoit

स पर्यगाच्छुक्रमकायमव्रणमस्नाविरꣳ शुद्धमपापविद्धम्।
Lui s'est répandu, lumineux, incorporel, sans défaut, sans organes, pur immaculé au mal.

कविर्मनीषी परिभूः स्वयंभूर्याथातथ्यतोऽर्थान्व्यदधा-
Voyant le Penseur celui qui devient, qui existe en soi, a ordonné les choses selon

-च्छाश्वतीभ्यः समाभ्यः ॥ ८॥
Pour lui définis les ages infinis

अन्धं तमः प्रविशन्ति येऽविद्यामुपासते।
Des d'aveugles ténèbres entrent ceux qui à l'ignorance se vouent

ततो भूय इव ते तमो य उ विद्यायाꣳ रताः॥ ९॥
Et comme en plus de ténèbres ceux qui à la connaissance tout entier sont voués.

अन्यदेवाहुर्विद्ययाऽन्यदाहुरविद्यया ।
Différente chose a dit-elle dit par la connaissance, bien autre chose a dit-elle dit par l'ignorance

इति शुश्रुम धीराणां ये नस्तद्विचचक्षिरे ॥१०॥
Ainsi avons-nous appris des sages qui nous ont cela révélé.

विद्यां चाविद्यां च यस्तद्वेदोभयꣳ सह ।
Connaissance et ignorance celui qui connaît comme les deux à la fois

अविद्यया मृत्युं तीर्त्वा विद्ययाऽमृतमश्नुते ॥११॥
par l'ignorance la mort ayant perdu par la connaissance de l'immortalité jouit

अन्धं तमः प्रविशन्ति येऽसंभूतिमुपासते ।
Les ténèbres entrent ceux qui au non devenir se vouent

ततो भूय इव ते तमो य उ संभूत्यꣳ रताः ॥१२॥
Et comme en plus de ténèbres ceux qui au devenir sont adonnés.

अन्यदेवाऽऽहुः संभवादन्यदाहुरसंभवात् ।
Bien autre chose a-t-il dit par la devenir autre chose a-t-il dit par l'non devenir

इति शुश्रुम धीराणां ये नस्तद्विचचक्षिरे ॥१३॥
Ainsi avons-nous appris des sages qui nous ont cela révélé

संभूतिं च विनाशं च यस्तद्वेदोभयꣳ सह ।
Devenir et dissolution celui qui cela connaît comme les deux à la fois

विनाशेन मृत्युं तीर्त्वा संभूत्याऽमृतमश्नुते ॥१४॥
par la dissolution la mort ayant perdu par le devenir de l'immortalité jouit

हिरण्मयेन पात्रेण सत्यस्यापिहितं मुखम् ।
de la Vérité

तत्त्वं पूषन्नपावृणु सत्यधर्माय दृष्टये ॥१५॥
Cela toi ôte le voile pour la loi de la Vérité pour la vision

पूषन्नेकर्षे यम सूर्य प्राजापत्य व्यूह रश्मीन्समूह ।
Evolueur unique Rishi Recteur Illuminateur Fils de Père des créatures disperse rassemble

तेजो यत्ते रूपं कल्याणतम तत्ते पश्यामि योऽ
de lumière de ton Corps le plus bénin cequ de toi je perçois qui

सावसौ पुरुषः सोऽहमस्मि ॥१६॥
absolument a Purusha ~~de~~ je suis

वायुरनिलममृतमथेदं भस्मान्त शरीरम् ।
Souffle halein immortalité voici

ॐ क्रतो स्मर कृतꣳ स्मर क्रतो स्मर कृतꣳ स्मर॥१७॥
Om Pouvoir d'agir souviens-toi de ce qui a été fait souviens-toi Pouvoir d'agir souviens-toi de ce qui a été fait souviens-toi

अग्ने नय सुपथा राये अस्मान्विश्वानि देव वयुनानि
Agni par la bonne voie à la félicité conduis-nous ô Dieu toutes les connaissances

विद्वान् ।
qui connaît

युयोध्यस्मज्जुहुराणमेनो भूयिष्ठां ते नमउक्तिं विधेम ॥
Eloigne à toi notre plus entière notre offrande
parole de soumission

इत्युपनिषद् ॥ इति वाजसनेयसंहितोपनिषत्संपूर्णा ॥

ॐ पूर्णमदः० शिष्यते ॥

ॐ शान्तिः शान्तिः शान्तिः ॥

寒（サム）暖（タン）笑（ワラ）答（コタエ）知（シ）高（タカ）風（カゼ）吹（フ）強（ツヨ）糸（イト）

喜（ヨロコ）歌（ウタ）雲（クモ）天（テン）話（ハナシ）書（カ）讀（ヨ）桃（モモ）流（ナガ）男（オトコ）

力（チカラ）猿（サル）雉（キジ）外（ホカ）内（ウチ）恐（オソ）第（ダイ）居（オリ）松（マツ）林（バヤシ）

花（ハナ）原（ハラ）貞（テイ）壽（ジュ）金（キン）物（モノ）町（マチ）習（ナラ）次（ツギ）音（オン）

圖（ズ）多（オウ）皆（ミナ）魚（ウオ）鯉（コイ）頭（アタマ）正（タダ）蟲（ムシ）食（タベ）形（カタチ）

池（イケ）供（トモ）村（ムラ）丸（マル）紙（カミ）神（カミ）岡（オカ）河（カワ）銀（ギン）青（アオ）

先月（センゲツ）　着物（キモノ）　自分（ジブン）　一羽（イチワ）　何羽（ナンバ）

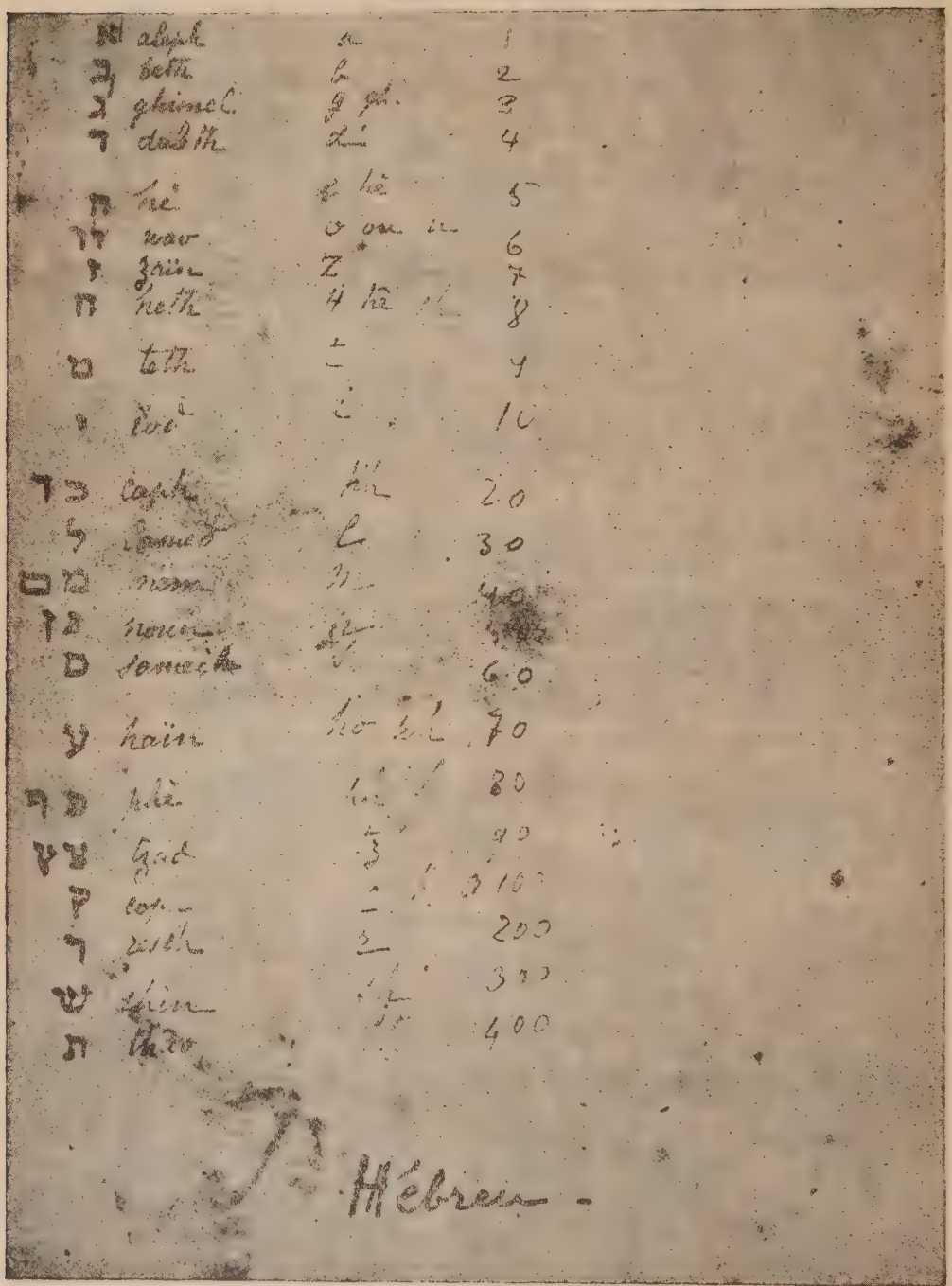
十羽（ジッパ）　太郎（タロウ）　天子（テンシ）　野原（ノハラ）　貞童（テイドウ）

壽男（ジュナン）　内地（ナイチ）　大勢（オウゼイ）　學ぶ（マナ）　とって食い（ク）

平假名（ヒラガナ）　片假名（カタカナ）　交り文（マジブン）　音圖（オンズ）　朝鮮（チョウセン）

臺灣（タイワン）　半分（ハンブン）　目盛（メモリ）　反物（タンモノ）　農家（ノウカ）

時節（ジセツ）　小馬（コウマ）　田植（タウエ）　汽船（キセン）　方角（ホウガク）


א aleph 1
ב beth 2
ג gheimel 3
ד daleth 4
ה hé 5
ו vav 6
ז zaïn 7
ח heth 8
ט teth 9
י yod 10
כ ך caph 20
ל lamed 30
מ ם mem 40
נ ן nun 50
ס samech 60
ע haïn 70
פ ף phé 80
צ ץ tsad 90
ק kof 100
ר reich 200
ש schin 300
ת thav 400
Hébreu

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THE ADVENT

The Divine gives itself to those who give themselves without reserve and in all their parts to the Divine. For them the calm, the light, the power, the bliss, the freedom, the wideness, the heights of knowledge, the seas of Ananda. - - - - *Sri Aurobindo.*

EDITORIALS*

On Meditation

COLLECTIVE meditation, of which the most external form is collective prayer, has been practised from ancient times for different reasons, in different ways, and with different purposes. Groups of persons whether belonging to the same Church or not come together to express a common feeling; in certain cases, it is to sing together in praise of God, to chant a hymn of gratitude, expressing love, adoration, thankfulness. In other cases,—there are many historical examples of this—people gather together for a common invocation, to ask something from the Divine in the hope that a prayer done collectively will have more effect than an individual prayer. Thus, in Europe prophets announced that in the year one thousand of grace there would be the end of the world; everywhere crowds assembled to implore the Divine protection and to pray that the catastrophe might be averted. More recently in modern times, when the king of England, George VI, had an attack of pneumonia and was almost

* Based on the Mother's Talks

on the point of death, British people gathered not only in churches but even in the streets in front of the royal palace, to pray in common and to ask God to save their king. This is of course a most external form, I could say, a most worldly meditation in community. Besides, in all groups of Initiation, in all spiritual schools of ancient times and naturally in modern times also, meditation in community has always been practised; here the purpose is evidently very different. People gather together to make a collective progress, to open themselves to a force, a light and an influence; it is somewhat like that which we all try to do here. There are two ways to proceed, and both are excellent. For individual meditation, first of all, one must prepare to meditate, that is to say, after sitting down in a position, at the same time comfortable enough not to be too cramped,—and not too comfortable either lest you should fall asleep, one establishes the calm and the silence, not only externally but internally and then one gathers as far as possible one's consciousness which is generally dispersed in all kinds of thoughts and preoccupations. One brings back the consciousness as completely as one can, and concentrates it in the region of the heart, towards the solar-plexus, so that all the active energies which are in the head, all that make the brain active are turned and concentrated on this point. This may be done in a few seconds, or in a few minutes. It depends upon each one; when you have prepared yourself in this way, you have the choice between two attitudes : active and passive.

What I call an active attitude is to concentrate on the person who guides the meditation with the will to open yourself to receive what is given to you or to the force with which you are put in contact. It is active, because here there is a will which acts and an active concentration to open yourself to some one or something.

The passive attitude is simply this : after having concentrated in the way I told you, to open yourself as one opens the door : imagine that in the centre of the heart there is a door,

then you open the door and remain still and silent in expectation. Naturally, you may use any other similar image; for example, the image of a book that you open completely, a book with all the pages white, that is to say, very peaceful and then wait for what happens.

These two attitudes are equally effective; you may adopt one or the other, according to the day, according to the occasion, according to the mood you feel disposed to. Or you may adopt one and hold to it if it is easier for you and if it is more advantageous.

Now, in our special case, I will tell you what I am trying to do.

It is now nearly one year that we had one Wednesday the Manifestation of the Supramental Force. Since that moment the Power is working very actively, even if very few people are able to perceive it; and I think that the time has come now to help it as much as we can by making an effort towards collective receptivity. Of course, the Force is not only acting in the Ashram, it acts in the whole world and everywhere; wherever there is receptivity it is working; the Ashram has not the exclusive monopoly or receptivity in the world. But as we are all here, knowing more or less what has happened, we can collectively, —individually I hope everyone is doing his best to profit by the circumstances—facilitate its action by trying to unify the ground, produce a particularly fertile soil, so that the maximum of collective receptivity may be obtained and that there be the least possible wastage of time and energy.

Now that you are warned, it is for you to make an effort in this direction.

7-2-1957

The Supramental Vision

In the supramental vision there is a direct, full and immediate knowledge of things, in the sense that you see all things at the same time totally, integrally ; you see the truth of a thing in all its aspects simultaneously.

But as soon as you want to explain or describe it, you are obliged to come down to a lower level. Sri Aurobindo calls it the Mind of Light. Here things have to be said or even thought or expressed and realised in action one after another in a certain order, in a certain relation to each other. Therefore the simultaneity disappears; for, in the present condition of our way of expression it is impossible to say everything at once outright. We are obliged to veil a portion of what we see and know in order to bring it out little by little. Sri Aurobindo therefore calls it a transparent veil; for you see all, you know all at the same time, you have the entire or total knowledge of a thing, but you cannot express it whole and entire at one stroke.

There are no words, no possible modes of expression for the supramental vision, so long we are what we are. We have to use an inferior procedure to express ourselves, and yet we possess at the same time the full knowledge. It is because of the necessity of transferring this knowledge into words that we are compelled, so to say, to hold back a part of what we know, letting it come out serially in a succession. It is the veil of expression that suits our need both for utterance and understanding. The knowledge is there, really there, we have not got to search for it and we have not got to express it as we go on finding it; no, it is there in its totality, only the necessity of expression makes us say things one after another, and that naturally diminishes the omnipotence ascribed by Sri Aurobindo to the vision. For what is omnipotent is the total vision expressing itself totally. Omniscience is there, in principle, it is perceptible; but this omniscience cannot act in its full power, for it has to come down a step to be able to express itself.

To live totally in the supramental knowledge, one must have other means of expression than those available at present. New modes of expression have to be developed for expressing supramental things in a supramental way. At present we have to raise our mental faculty to its maximum, to a sort of frontier that is hardly visible and yet which exists; for our means of expression still belong to this mental world and they do not possess supramental power. We have not got the necessary organs. We must become beings of the supramental world, with a supramental substance, a supramental inner organisation, to express the supramental knowledge in a supramental way. Till now we could, in some part of our consciousness, come out wholly into the supramental vision and knowledge, but could not express it from there. We had to come, as I say, one plane lower down to be able to express ourselves.

That is how this veil is transparent to the consciousness, for the consciousness sees and knows things in a supramental way, but a part remains veiled and comes out only progressively, for it has not the means to do otherwise.

To the Sadhaks of the Ashram

(1)

There are people who come to me and say that they would like to go home, for their health does not permit them to continue here, it gradually gets worse and worse and they ask for my permission.

I wonder at their ignorance. Perhaps I should not wonder; human nature is like that. These people do not know or see or feel in the least that they are here in the best of conditions for cure, nowhere else in the world would they get anything like the opportunity or the help that is here. Naturally if one is to be here and derive the full benefit of his stay, one has to fulfil certain

conditions or rather one condition. That one condition is to give up the ego, not to live the life of the ego, but to live the life of the soul, to dedicate oneself to the Divine. So it is evident that if this condition is not fulfilled, that is to say, being here you continue to live the life of your old self, your ego, if you refuse to change, naturally you do not get the benefit of the help that is given here. And when you refuse to go forward, not only do you halt where you are, you go backward. That is the meaning of one's health getting worse. Of course if you ask my permission to go away, you have it. The Grace is everywhere for all to the extent they can receive and allow it to come to them. But that is not what things would be if you were here and agreed to attempt to fulfil the conditions of the life here.

To be able to stay here one must have faith. But people's faith depends upon what the ego desires and seeks. "I believe in the Divine if I find Him doing or arranging things as I would like them to be. If things happen contrary to my notions and wishes, then I believe no more in the Divine." That is their attitude.

Now it is precisely this ego-view that vitiates one's approach to life and existence. In the true and the most ancient tradition of spirituality, the world was never looked upon as Maya or illusion, it was the ego that was considered as an illusion and the generator of illusions. It is the ego and ego's view that puts us in a wrong relation with the world and the consequences are all the falsehoods and miseries. Be egoless, do not contaminate your perception or your movement with the ego's touch, you will see the world changed and transformed.

If you had faith, if you had less of the egoistic demands and shrinkings, you would see how beautifully Nature collaborates with you.

The greatest thing that can ever be, the most marvellous thing since the beginning of creation, the *miracle* has happened. And that is the only thing that concerns us most intimately and the only thing we should be concerned with. A new world, yes a completely new world, is born and is here. Nothing can be more

momentous. And yet, do you know, feel or perceive it ? Unless things give a physical knock upon your nose, you do not believe in its reality. And yet it is there. You are blind and without sense because you are ego-bound. It is your I, My and Mine that has woven around you a web, a screen.

(2)

Wake up in yourself a will to conquer. Not a mere will in the mind but a will in the very cells of your body. Without that you can't do anything, e.g., you may take a hundred medicines but they won't cure you unless you have a will to overcome the physical illness.

I may destroy the adverse force that has possessed you. I may repeat the action a thousand times. But each time that a vacuum is created it will be filled up by one of the many forces that try to rush in. That is why, I say, wake up the will to conquer.

20-10-1957 NOLINI KANTA GUPTA

PERFECT SURRENDER

THREE figures of total self-giving to the Divine :

(1) To prostrate at His feet giving up all pride in perfect humility.

(2) To lay down one's being before Him, to open out the whole body from head to foot, as one opens a book, spreading out the centres in order to make all their movements visible, with a full sincerity that permits nothing to remain hidden.

(3) To nestle in His arms, melt in Him with a loving and absolute trust.

These movements may be accompanied with three formulas or any one of them, according to the case :

(1) Let Thy Will be done, not mine.

(2) As Thou wilt, as Thou wilt.

(3) I am Thine for eternity.

Generally, when these movements are done rightly, they are followed by complete identification, the dissolution of the ego, bringing the sublime Felicity.

THE MOTHER

SYMBOLS—DREAMS—VISIONS

(*A Cross, the ends of the cross are joined to each other so as to form two triangles, one above the horizontal bar and the other below. Two smaller triangles are formed in the same way at the intersection of the horizontal and vertical lines of the cross. Thus they look like 2 squares with four triangles within each.*)

The cross has always the same meaning. The squares indicate the perfect creation inward and outward. The triangles are the four parts—supermind, mind, vital and body, probably, fulfilled in the Sachchidananda consciousness.

16-4-1934

* *

(*A globe of light with a black ring around.*)

It means the inner manifestation of the Light with the black ring of a still unconverted Matter around it.

(*A triangle bisected in the centre; spark of lights on it.*)

It is perhaps a symbol of light descending into the physical mind, vital and body.

9-4-1934

* *

(*Figure* 21. *The front of* 2 *&* 1 *is of deep green light; the rear of white light.*)

It may signify a perfection in all the three planes; white is the divine light, green the light of life, divine consciousness in life.

* *

(*A triangle; on the other side of the base an inverted triangle. A light shining on the top of the triangle but there is no light within the two triangles.*)

The figure seems to indicate the cosmic nature still in the ignorance—lit only by a light above at the top.

14-2-1934

* *

(*A circle within a square. Figure* 1 *in the circle; the figure disappears and in its stead there is a human figure with a child.*)

The circle is the spiritual being, the square the supramental perfection. It is not clear about the figure. It might be either of two quite opposite things. (1) The One the Divine sole existing there, then the appearance of the supramentalised humanity which did not before exist; or (2) it on the contrary indicates the ego which is replaced by the psychic being (the child), this being the condition for supramentalisation of the being.

11-7-1934

* *

(*An electric bulb descending with a golden light above it. There is no light in the globe of the bulb itself.*)

Perhaps the electric bulb is a symbol of the instrumentation for the golden light to manifest.

13-2-1934

* *

(*Sun with blue colour. Around it are four smaller suns also in blue.*)

The sun is the light of Truth, blue is the colour of the higher consciousness.

(*Two half circles, one opening above and the other below; both joined by a line on either side of which there are suns; sun in the upper half-circle.*)

The two semi-circles are the higher and lower hemisphere of consciousness. The meaning of the other details cannot be given with certitude.

20-8-1934

* *

(*An expanse of water; there is a sun on it spreading its rays of light.*)

The water is consciousness getting illumined.

20-8-1934

* *

(*A palm with all the fingers illumined with light; the rest of the palm was not luminous.*)

I do not see what it can mean unless it is a hand in which the fingers are conscious—like a musician's.

31-1-1934

* *

(*A big T in red.*)

Simply the lower part of the cross. The red signifies the physical; it is the cosmic and individual in the physical nature, but the transcendent consciousness is not there.

3-1-1934

* *

(*A circle with a cross within; over the cross are spread four petals.*)

It—the cross and the circle—(is) what I have already explained. The flower indicates the perfect creation probably (4 petals).

28-3-1934

* *

(*Two figures one within the other, like parallelograms. The inner figure is deep red almost dark and the other was shining red.*)

It must be two parts of the earth consciousness—one organised and illumined, the other still obscure.

13-3-1934

* *

(*A devotee doing pranam to the Mother; She is standing with a shield in her hand; in the centre of the shield there is a cross.*)

The cross indicates the triple Divine (transcendent, universal, individual); the shield means protection.

9-7-1934

* *

(*While looking at the sun with closed eyes I saw red lotuses ascending; their petals were turned towards the sun and their branches downward.*)

The red lotus is the presence of the Divine on earth; the sun is the Divine Truth. It indicates the Divine manifestation on earth raising earth consciousness towards the Truth.

9-7-1934

* *

(*First a pressure on the crown of the head; then a flame of light rising up from the crown.*)

The pressure of course is the pressure of the higher consciousness trying to descend into the system. The light is created by the pressure and it arises in a flame of aspiration towards the highest.

(*A hemisphere with a sun inside; joined to it by a line is another hemisphere below full of light. On either side of the joining line there are two suns.*

Can this be interpreted as:

Upper hemisphere indicates the Infinite containing the Truth.

The line that joins the two hemispheres is the supramental. The two suns on either side of it are Sri Aurobindo and Mother. The whole is illumined by the supramental suns.*)

Of course it can be taken like that, in fact it is probably the meaning, except perhaps with regard to the item marked*. It may be that, but it may also be something else.

* *

(*A triangle whose sides are of white shining light; within is a being standing with a globe in its hands—also shining white. The triangle is coming down.*)

The white would indicate a triple power on some higher spiritual plane; the globe would indicate a change on life on the earth plane.

* *

(*There is felt a certain warmth in the heart.*)

It comes sometimes from the approach of Agni fire, sometimes from that of love or Ananda, sometimes simply from a touch of the Force.

* *

(*There is in me no sense of dissatisfaction with things as they are, as yet.*)

There is no need for dissatisfaction, it does not help. What is wanted is a strong aspiration.

* *

(*I see the Mother with a crown on her head. There are flowers of vital sincerity.*)

It probably meant that that needed to be established in the atmosphere.

15-9-1934

* *

(*On the 15th of August I offered the flowers of Humility and Surrender; but why did it happen that only flowers of Humility went to Sri Aurobindo's hand and those of Surrender remained with me?*)

Perhaps humility has to come first and surrender afterwards as a result.

3-9-1934

* *

(*A powerful globe of light; it has a dark spot at the centre. How can the dark remain there when the whole globe is burning?*)

There can be light in the mind etc. but with some central ignorance which prevents the light being of the highest kind.

13-4-1934

* *

One cannot go back to the past, one has always to go in the future.

19-1-1935

* *

The being is made up of many parts. One part may know, the other may not care for the knowledge or act according to it. The whole being has to be made one in the light so that all parts may act harmoniously according to the Truth.

* *

...Useless or not, untruth should be avoided.

6-5-1932

* *

(*I have good deal of what they call day-dreaming. What is to be done?*)

All that is the vital mind; it lies in everybody, the habit of such imaginations. It is not very important, but of course it has to be got rid of, as the basis is ego.

2-10-1934

* *

(*Again sex scenes in dream.*)

It is only by becoming conscious in sleep that it can be stopped; also one must be quite free in the waking consciousness.

* *

(*You once wrote about true consciousness in the vital; is it the same as feeling that one cannot live apart from the Mother? In that condition there could be no resistance to surrender to the Mother. One would not feel any difficulty or struggle in the Path.*)

It can be part of the true vital consciousness at a certain stage when the psychic is already in control; but otherwise the feeling that there is no difficulty or struggle can hardly be true.

The true vital consciousness is one in which the vital makes full surrender, converts itself into an instrument of the Divine, making no demand, insisting on no desire, answering to the Mother's force and to no other, calm, unegoistic, giving an absolute loyalty and obedience, with no personal vanity or ambition, only asking to be a pure and perfect instrument, desiring nothing for itself but that the Truth may prevail within itself and everywhere and the Divine Victory take place and the Divine Work be done.

THE MOTHER

Mother and I are one but in two bodies; there is no necessity for both the bodies to do the same thing always. On the contrary, as we are one it is quite sufficient for one to sign, just as it is quite sufficient for one to go down to receive Pranam or give meditation.

* *

What is good work and what is bad or less good work? All is Mother's work and equal in the Mother's eyes.

* *

(*Is the Mother reducing physical nearness from me because the inner closeness is growing or is it something else?*)

The Mother has for a long time past been limiting the outer contact with the sadhaks as much as possible. The reason you

speak of is one of the reasons, but there are others which it is not necessary to speak of.

27-7-1936

* *

...There may be a true inward nearness even if there is no physical closeness.

3-10-1938

* *

You should not get upset because I point out your difficulties—you should rather be glad and feel in it a help to get rid of them. What I meant by old ideas and feelings were those which prevent you from accepting the ways of the life here freely —old ideas and feelings remaining from the family and social life in Bengal. And I said it was a pity because you got disturbed because of them instead of remaining in full peace. 'It was a pity' does not mean *dukher bishaya*, it simply means in English that it would be better if it were not so.

So, cheer up and don't get sorry for nothing. The change we want of you is not to get troubled by trifles but to remain in all conditions and under all circumstances cheerful and contented and happy. If you do that, all the rest will be done for you by the Mother.

SRI AUROBINDO

THE TEACHING OF SRI AUROBINDO (4)

The Psychology of Social Development

WHAT is true of man is equally true of aggregates of men. For, after all, the collectivity is formed out of association of individuals and it is their natures, their movements, their aspirations and ideas that go to shape the life of the group. And yet, it is not merely a conglomeration of individuals. The collectivity acquires and builds up its own mores, its own individuality and direction, determined no doubt, largely, by the characteristic temperament, the trend of life and thought movement of the men forming it, but also exercising its own subtle influence over the life and progress of its constituent individuals. Each society has its distinct career, its purpose and goal. This is so because the collectivity also is an expression of the manifesting Godhead even as the individual is. The Individual and the Collective are two terms of the Revelation. The aim of both is the same : to serve That which transcends both, to manifest God. The one actualises the possibility of the Divine's self-revelation in each individual centre and form, while the other works to bring out the potentialities in the mass. The destiny of the individual is also the destiny of man in society : to arrive at a supreme self-perfection in the full figure of the Truths of God, Freedom and Unity. The means too is the same : spiritual evolution. Only there is a variation in stress. The process in the development of the collectivity is necessarily less overtly conscious, more slow and meandering than in the case of the individual.

There are many ups and downs, advances, reversions or relapses making the entire human activity seem a meaningless whirligig turning round and round. But that is only an ap-

pearance. The evolutionary movement of humanity does not proceed in a straight line. Its course is spiral. That is to say, the wheel moves round and round, yet it goes upward and forward also. The cyclic revolutions of humanity on the move ensure a thoroughness, a meticulous care to pick up every possible gain made on the way, now advancing leaving some elements aside which are not ready, now returning to assimilate those that are mature.

A close study of the growth, life and decay of human societies reveals, Sri Aurobindo points out, certain broad stages through which they pass in the course of their development pointing to a definite course and trend in which the whole of mankind is moving. Each stage records the cultivation and blossoming of a particular faculty or faculties in the growing personality of Man.

The early beginnings of societies are marked by a highly imaginative and symbolic mentality. Man perceives and functions not by reasoning, but by an instinctive, an almost intuitive response to the promptings of Nature around. Everywhere he senses and feels a pulsating Life, a Presence with which all is instinct, a Mystery with which all is enveloped. He comes to regard it as a Mighty Godhead from which all derives and to which all flows. He perceives a natural oneness between the life within himself and the life without in the universe; both are sensed to be led and ruled by the veiled Deities. A religious awe and feeling predominate. Life organises itself around these vibrant ideas rendered by a rich imagination into forms that are living symbols of this character of the physical universe as the projection of an unseen Above. Such were the societies of Vedic India, early Greece and Egypt. They were governed by a predominantly religious feeling and spiritual motif. This may be called the *Symbolic Age* in which physical life and activities are looked upon as figures of a greater Life and Activity above and behind. The Spiritual Idea dominates. All modes and institutions, social traditions and customs, ritual and ceremony, reflect this master Idea of a manifesting supraphysical Divinity.

The Idea or Truth finds certain psychological concepts which serve as forms or several lines of its expression. And these formulate themselves in the course of time into fixed moulds or types. Thus for instance in the ancient Indian tradition, the Truth of the Virat Purusha in the Veda, the Cosmic Godhead expressing itself in a fourfold movement of the Divine as Knowledge, Divine as Power, Divine as Production and Mutuality, Divine as Service, tends to fix itself in the moulds of psychological temperament, psychic type with the corresponding ethical discipline—Dharma. The truths basing each of these Types flower as so many Ideals, which begin to rule all by themselves. There is a shift of emphasis to this psychological and ethical framework originally formed in service of the Spiritual Idea. Dharma becomes paramount. The ethical type comes to the forefront. This is the *Typal Age*. The Truth that originally inspired these multiple radii of types and ideals recedes into the background though it is not yet lost to sight. Truth yields place to the Law of Truth—Dharma. This is the age of great social Ideals which are held up and honoured for their own sake. The lofty idealism of mind and spirit of the Brahmin, the heroism of the Kshatriya (the chivalry of the European Knight and the self-effacing fervour of the Samurai), the rectitude and philanthropy of the Vaishya, the fidelity and service of the Shudra, are some of the finest flowers of this growth.

But a stage arrives when this law itself ceases to be living. There comes about an overgrowth of the machinery, social, religious and other, which has been erected to ensure the effective working of the manifold Law. Social and religious hierarchies, conventions and regulations, customs and observances etc., exist for themselves and lay complete hold on the mind of man to the total exclusion of the spiritual and psychological truths of which they were originally effectuating channels. The life current of the people runs into these hardening frames and an artificiality settles on the breath of the society. This is the *Conventional Age* in which nothing is permitted to tresspass the authority of cus-

tom and convention which none can question with impunity. Typical societies in this stage are those of Mediaeval Europe and pre-Buddhist India. The very excess of these rigidities, however, provokes a strong reaction and the mind of man begins at last to protest, to question, to doubt and ultimately to deny and revolt.

Thus is ushered in the next Age, the *Age of Individualism and Reason.* Man refuses to accept things as sacrosanct simply because they are so held and sanctified by tradition or authority religious or secular. He claims the individual right to examine and satisfy to his reason before he could give adherence. Nothing can hold unless it passes the tests set by the rational mind. New-touch-stones are found, new lines of knowledge are developed to this end. The one great service rendered by this turn of the human mind is the swift elimination of the fungus growths and accretions that have encrusted the developing spirit with diverse forms of dogma, superstition and bigotry. Much of the ground is cleared; the mind of man is trained and equipped for a conscious and rapid advance in the direction of a progressive fulfilment of the deeper aspirations of the race. The most notable results of this reign of Reason are to be seen in the advance of physical science. But there it stops. Mental reason arrogates to itself the right to reject and refuses entry to all that does not and cannot submit itself to the canons of its enquiry. It refuses to recognise that there are spheres of existence which exceed the normal reach of the physical senses on whose data its knowledge is erected. The evolving Spirit, however, bursts forth from these bounds and floods the arena with a mass of phenomena before which human Reason stands utterly bewildered.

The mind is perforce compelled to conduct its search for the right norm, the true Law and aim of the life of man and his society on larger and subtler levels of existence. The *Subjective Age* has begun. From the domain of physical Matter the enquiry is shifted to the field of the life-forces and for a time theories of Vitalism, claiming to find the key in the truth of Life-Power, Will-in-Life, prosper. They in turn pall before new discoveries

in the still vaster regions of the being governed by movements of a Consciousness of which the normal mind knows only the superfices—the Subliminal. Sciences of psychology and para-psychology are developed and the enquiry is pursued on more subjective routes. More gains are made, new knowledge is garnered but the key to the full and harmonious development of man and society is still not found.

Yet the trend is unmistakable. It is in the direction of the centre of the manifesting Spirit, the Soul. There is an increasing recognition that no solution in terms of the physical or vital or even psychological living can really meet the complex situation facing humanity. The only solution that could resolve the contraries and ensure a harmonious progress towards the destined goal of Freedom, Unity and Perfection, is to be found on the soul level, in the awakening of the spiritual consciousness in the race, a consciousness in which man is alive to his unity with his fellow-beings in the one common Source of the Immanent Divinity. That is the objective of the coming Age, the *Spiritual Age* towards which are converging all the ways of the subjective present.

The fact of a spiritual consciousness has never been truly open to doubt. Exalted figures there have been in all times, in all countries, who have attained to spiritual manhood and resolved the problem of existence for themselves. What is now required and expected of man by the labouring mother-earth is that he shall take steps to extend the possibilities of spiritual living to the generality of mankind. The initiative and lead is to be taken by individuals or groups of individuals who have felt the urgency of the need to transcend the limitations of the normal mental consciousness functioning within the circumscribing physical-vital formulae, and to arrive in the freedom of spiritual consciousness at a fuller life in which the native Powers of the Soul, Love, Beauty, Harmony, Will and Knowledge, would spontaneously manifest.

The environment in which such an endeavour could succeed is a collectivity where the individual gets adequate facilities for

the free development of his spiritual personality, untrammelled by restrictions imposed from without and equally he too recognises the claim of his brethren by contributing the gains of his Consciousness and Power to the enrichment of the totality. The greater the Dynamism he is able to activise in himself, the larger the extent to which he can mould the environment. And as this Teaching aims at nothing short of the attainment of the highest Original Knowledge-Will as the goal of individual evolution, it envisages too a race ultimately fulfilled in its Destiny of Perfection.

M. P. PANDIT

SRI AUROBINDO INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY CENTRE AND THE PHILOSOPHY OF INTEGRAL EDUCATION

THE decision to establish the Sri Aurobindo International University Centre was taken at a public convention held in April 1951, and it was formally inaugurated in January 1952. However, it was built upon a school founded in 1943. This school was an extension of the Sri Aurobindo Ashram, which Sri Aurobindo founded in 1926 in collaboration with the Mother, a French-born spiritual seeker and worker, who first met him in 1914. The Ashram itself was directly linked with the group of persons who had lived informally with him and pursued life and culture under his guidance since 1910, when he came down to make Pondicherry his home. And all these developments sought to embody the perceptions of life, which had progressively grown in him.

In the last decade of the nineteenth century he clearly saw that great changes were going to come upon humanity. He felt at that time that one cultural era was about to terminate and a new one to begin. In his poem "A Vision of Science", written in the nineties of the last century, he said:

> I saw the mornings of the future rise,
> I heard the voices of an age unborn.

As time passed, he felt that the age of analytical intellectualism and science was fast reaching its climax and that man had better prepare for a synthetic and more comprehensive power of the spirit. During the years 1914 and 1921 he expounded these views with complete clarity in his philosophical journal 'Arya', and wrote: "Man has created a system of civilization which

has become too big for his limited mental capacity, understanding, and his still more limited spiritual and moral capacity to utilize and manage....A greater whole-being, whole-knowledge, whole-power is needed to weld all into a greater unity of whole-life."[1]

An integral personality was thus the problem of the age, and this had been his sole preoccupation since he came to Pondicherry. But long years of yogic and spiritual exploration and realization were necessary before his efforts reached the desired results, and it was only in 1926 that he started regular institutionalized work. The Mother had also had similar, almost identical, perceptions of life. She joined him in 1914 and became a complete collaborator in the work. This work consisted essentially of an attempt to recreate man into his full integral personality. It involved the discovery and realization of the Spirit in him and the transformation of the egoistic warring impulses of normal life into a picture of integral harmony. The method adopted and followed was that of the Integral Yoga, the system of personal development and perfection evolved by Sri Aurobindo. More and more individuals were to be drawn into the work, and thus changes in the standards and consciousness of life initiated and expanded. The ultimate objective was a general change in the life of man, from that of limited, externally determined, and predominantly analytical mental consciousness to an integral, self-existent, essentially intuitive consciousness of the spirit. This change, he affirmed, was ordained by cosmic evolution itself. Matter, life, and mind must be followed by a higher term, the 'supermind', which is the integral spiritual consciousness. This evolutionary process, he further affirmed, could be accelerated a great deal if man consciously collaborated with it. With man the evolution must become individual and conscious. The emergence of mind in cosmos had involved, according to him,

[1] The Life Divine (American edition), 1951, pp. 933-4. (Originally published in the 'Arya'.)

a development from below—but also a descent from above—the more conscious ranges of existence. Similarly, Sri Aurobindo said, a descent of the 'supermind' from above would facilitate its emergence from below and its manifestation in life. And this could be attempted and achieved by intensive yogic action.

Evidently this is a profound work and an extremely long-range project. There can be no question of accomplishing the work soon. One has to see and make sure of the basic perceptions of life and then pursue the work. Starting the Ashram in 1926 launched the work, and as the years rolled by, the number of individuals who joined it increased; a community grew up and developed a rich and varied life; non-resident devotees also multiplied, and this ideology of life tended to widen its sphere of influence. In 1952, when the University Centre was inaugurated, the Ashram community consisted of some eight hundred persons, with a wide and varied pattern of life. Besides the essential services and departments, it had engineering workshops, a cottage-industries department, agricultural farms, flower gardens, a modern printing press, a publication department, a full-fledged school with a large teaching staff, a library, and many other smaller departments. Above all, there was an established tradition and atmosphere of a particular view and way of life and an intensive pursuit of truth and culture. It was in such a setting that the Sri Aurobindo International University Centre came into being and immediately inherited the full tradition of the Ashram. It grew, in fact, from and was an extension of the Ashram, and continues to exist as one aspect of the latter's complex community life.

Conceptions of Life and of Man

Its objective, too, is the same. The ideal of integral personality, the problem of the age, is here pursued through education. Sri Aurobindo at one stage of his work began to value education as an important means for the expansion of his work, and the

University Centre was a consequence of it. The Ashram was essentially a place for spiritual seeking and realization, and usually adult persons with a conscious aspiration for spiritual life turned towards it. The educational project was to take up young children and help them to grow harmoniously in the direction of an integral selfhood, a comprehensive spiritual personality. Ordinarily, when we seek an integrated personality, we emphasize an equal growth for the will and the emotions, besides the intellect. This ideal is becoming increasingly popular. But Sri Aurobindo and the Mother, in their perceptions and realizations of life, discovered what they call the 'Psychic Being' in man. This is a principle of consciousness, distinct from the mental, which is essentially whole and integral in nature. Our mental consciousness is, on the other hand, constitutionally a balance of tensions and polarized actions. In order that our normal personality may become integrated, affirm the authors of integral education, it is necessary that this integral principle of human life should be developed and activized. The aim of integral education is precisely so to organize life and teaching that the 'Psychic Being' in the child gets the best chance of exercise, expression, and growth. Sri Aurobindo has said : "It is not yet realised what this soul is, or that the true secret, whether with child or man, is to help him to find his deeper self, the real psychic entity within. That, if we ever give it a chance to come forward, and still more if we call it into the foreground as 'the leader of the march set in our front', will itself take most of the business of education out of our hands, and will develop the capacity of the psychological being towards a realisation of its potentialities, of which our present mechanical view of life and man, and the external routine methods of dealing with them, prevent us from having any experience or forming any conception."[1]

Our general conceptions of life and man are really external and our methods of dealing with them are similar. Even when

[1] The Human Cycle (American edition), p. 35

we wish to promote the growth of individuality and personal initiative, we attempt to organize only our sense-experiences, thinking, and impulses. These are all intimately interwoven with the environment and essentially determined by it. The individuality and the initiative that we thus achieve is, therefore, a specialized formation of certain conscious forces, which are externally determined. They are, in fact, instruments of action in the world—the surface reactions of our personality to the environment. But the true 'own-ness' in man, the real seat of individuality and initiative, is a deeper fact, a spiritual principle of consciousness—the 'Psychic Being'. An activisation of it, therefore, is the real way to develop individuality, initiative, integration and a true mastery of the normal factors and forces of personality. Hence this is the true business of education. The mind and body have then to be cultivated and developed as instruments of the inner spiritual principle, and not as independent facts.

In the West, Jung felt obliged, on the basis of his psychological observations and reflections, to affirm a principle corresponding to that of the 'Psychic Being'. He said : "If we survey the situation as a whole, we come to the inevitable conclusion—at least in my opinion—that a psychic element is present that expresses itself through the tetrad. This conclusion demands neither daring speculation nor extravagant phantasy. If I have called the centre the 'self', I did so after ripe reflection and a careful assessment of the data of experience as well as of history."[1] The tetrad refers to the four fundamental functions of the psyche, the whole mental being, according to Jung. A centre behind the mental functioning is thus affirmed, and this is "not identical with the 'I' " of our normal personality. As to the function of the centre, it is said that it "acts like a magnet upon the disparate materials and processes of the unconscious and, like a crystal

[1] C.G. Jung, The Integration of the Personality, p. 198

grating, catches them one by one."[1] It is thus an active integrating principle of our personality.

The similarity between the 'centre' of Jung and the 'Psychic Being' of Sri Aurobindo is obvious. But the method of yogic exploration is never satisfied with an inference, however compelling it might be. With Sri Aurobindo, the 'Psychic Being' is an experienced and verified fact, and the life of the Ashram and of the University Centre bears ample evidence of its truth and reality. Whenever and wherever its active expression is seen, we experience a personality of striking harmony, wholeness, joy, clarity, and integrity, and under its influence the normal functions of mind and body acquire a much greater efficiency and well-being.

However, the activization and expression of the 'Psychic Being' are not the full aim of education for the Sri Aurobindo International University Centre, though it is its first concern. In the integral personality Sri Aurobindo distinguishes three principal dimensions : the conscious, the subconscious, and the superconscious. In the evolutionary sequence, the first is present experience, the second past experience, and the third future experience. In other words, they represent the stages of what man is, what he has been, and what he is to be. The superconscious, the range of future growth, evidently covers a number of stages. Sri Aurobindo was particularly interested in exploring and identifying these stages and discovering ways and means of making them dynamic in life. He has done this task with great thoroughness, showing how each succeeding form of consciousness presents a higher pattern of integration. The highest in our immediate range of growth is the 'supermind', to which we have already referred. This is the ideal of integral and integrating consciousness. The 'Psychic Being' is evolutionally the ready emergent, and the first integral and integrating principle. It can transform our personality into the

[1] C. G. Jung. The Integration of the Personality, p. 197

form and pattern of its wholeness and unity. However, the highest degree of integration and unity is achievable by the 'supermind'. Hence the full aim of the University Centre is to realize and make manifest the 'supermind'.

The mental man must, therefore, seek to rise to the state of supramental consciousness. The 'supermind', we have said before, is an evolutionary principle. One day, like mind, it must also become a manifest principle. And to that end, in its present status of a latent possibility, it must operate dynamically. If man becomes more and more responsive and receptive to its influence, its final manifestation will be greatly expedited. This will mean for man a new standard of living : in place of limited knowledge, joy and power he will have integral knowledge, joy and power. That is, affirm Sri Aurobindo and the Mother, the most dynamic trend of the evolutionary effort today, and therefore education cannot do better than assist this process and avail itself of this force for the growth and development of man. The Mother has stated that Sri Aurobindo had for years considered education "as one of the best means of preparing future humanity to receive the supramental light that will transform the elite of today into a new race manifesting upon earth the new light and force of life."[1]

For Sri Aurobindo the 'supermind' is not merely a philosophical concept on which to base a large educational project. It is an experienced fact of existence and a necessary part of the evolution of man. In early life Sri Aurobindo was drawn towards the possibility and reality of an integral experience : he sought hard for it, discovered it, and utilized it in his work. Sri Aurobindo has said categorically : "I know with absolute certitude that the supramental is a truth and that its advent is in the very nature of things inevitable."[2] The 'supermind' is therefore a fact of experience, and the University Centre is a

[1] Integral Education (Sri Aurobindo Ashram, Pondicherry), p. 91
Letters of Sri Aurobindo, Series II (Sri Aurobindo Ashram, Pondicherry), P. 67

project to create and widen the sphere of its action. However, it is as yet a new discovery and only those who have been close to the process that led to it, and have experienced something of it, can really respond to it. Others will have to wait for an expansion of the work and some experience of it. But an intellectual understanding of the ideal is perfectly possible for every thinking person, and an appreciation of the principles of the 'Psychic Being' and the 'supermind' can undoubtedly give education new aims and methods.

The ideal of the 'supermind' really creates new ideals of personality, of knowledge and of cultural life as such. The 'supermind' is the highest integral experience. Its factuality and reality make the integral personality, the integral knowledge and the integral life of mankind a concrete possibility. We are today content to co-ordinate rationally and develop equally by the knowing, feeling and willing parts of our personality. We regard this as the ideal of integrated life. But a true integral personality should in fact build up into a conscious unity our entire range of the conscious, the subconscious, and the superconscious in us.

In the field of knowledge we feel keenly the lack of unity and co-ordination and, therefore, an increasing emphasis is being laid on 'wholeness' and the inter-relatedness of different branches of knowledge. But a total perspective of knowledge continues to seem doubtful. And how can a mental consciousness, more adept at analytical exploration, build up a synthetic perception of total reality ? At best it can speculate about it and make certain generalizations, which are abstract and lack concrete reality. The perception of integral knowledge, in its full coherence, presupposes a competent integral consciousness. The 'supermind' thus makes integral knowledge a concrete possibility. This is vitally significant in our world of disjointed knowledge and undirected effort.

Again, human unity is a much-cherished ideal, but our different loyalties in culture, religion, and nationalism always

make it extremely difficult to achieve. The question is, unless we discover a way of resolving and transcending our different kinds of egoisms which are differentiating principles, how can we possibly feel humanity as concretely one ? But the supramental consciousness, which is free from inner divisions and partialities and is able to see 'the whole' steadily, is capable of knowing human unity as an immediate fact of experience. It is also the consciousness which can effectively resolve egoisms of all kinds. Hence the 'supermind' has the capacity to make our much-cherished, but little-believed, ideal of human unity practical and positive. If tomorrow we could have in the world a few persons to whom this unity was a concrete reality, what a difference it would make. And if human unity became a perceived fact even for a small number, we could begin to think of an integral culture of man, in which each distinctive culture would be regarded as a valuable contribution. Similarly, in the field of religion, we could begin to think of an integral experience of the Godhead and the ultimate, and then regard the distinctive experience of each religion as valuable. Divergent philosophies, too, confuse mankind a great deal. But the supramental unity regards them as particular mental ways of considering reality. Sri Aurobindo has said : "A diversity in oneness is the law of the manifestation ; the supramental unification and integration must harmonize these diversities, but to abolish them is not the intention of the Spirit in Nature."[1] Another similar passage reads : "A unity behind diversity and discord is the secret of the variety of human religions and philosophies ; for they all get at some image or some clue, touch some portion of the one Truth, or envisage some of its myriad aspects."[2] However, "to see things steadily and see them whole is not possible to the mind ; but it is the very nature of the transcendent 'supermind' ".[3] And again, 'supermind' "is in its foundation

[1] The Life Divine, p. 70
[2] ibid, p. 623
[3] ibid, p. 126

a unitarian integralizing and harmonic consciousness".[1]

Such is 'supermind' and such are its implications for man. This is what Sri Aurobindo sought through life and the same is the ideal of the Ashram and the aim of the Sri Aurobindo International University Centre.

(To be continued)

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INDRA SEN

[1] ibid, p. 861

THE TEACHINGS OF THE MOTHER

VIII

THE SOUL OR THE PSYCHIC

How to Realise the Psychic ?

IF it is true that the psychic is our true self, and that it is only when we identify ourselves with it that we can become real individuals, then it is obvious that nothing should be regarded as more pressingly important in life than the discovery and realisation of the psychic. Of what avail our humanitarian strivings, our struggles to reform others, to help others, to enlighten others, so long as we are ourselves unregenerate, helplessly tossed between the dualities of good and evil, success and failure, gain and loss, honour and dishonour, and pain and pleasure; so long as we are floundering in ignorance and torn between the conflicting tendencies of our heterogeneous being ? Self-realisation, which is the most pressing problem of our life, can be shelved for some time, for even a long time, if you will; but you cannot shelve it for ever. Your soul insists on being recognised and given an effective voice in your life. It is a subtle device of the ego—and it has its utility in the evolution of our being—to shift its focus of interest from its grossly selfish desires to the service of others; but whether it seeks petty personal satisfactions or the satisfaction of the collectivity, it remains essentially what it is—all that it does as a step to self-improvement is to rise from the restricted field of restless rajasic cravings to the comparative poise and wide, lucid outlook of the sattwic nature. But the sattwic ego is even stronger than the rajasic ego, and, being justified in its own eyes and in the eyes of society, it is more difficult to get rid of. Many an

honest philanthrope comes out of his benevolent obsessions, a disillusioned man, stung by the discovery of the corroding canker of the ego, the base self, in what he had fondly believed to be his selfless work. How can an action be selfless so long as our ego, the false self, has not faded in the eternal radiance of our true self, the psychic ? Deluded by the ego, we hug the illusion of disinterested work and drown the inner urges to self-discovery in the fervour of social and humanitarian activities; but however beneficial the activities may be, however much they may help the world and the development of our being, they are not an outcome of knowledge, and cannot, therefore, be a substitute for the action which wells out of the depths of the psychic. For, the activities of the psychic are directed by the Will of the Divine, and carry in them not only the fiat and force of the Divine, but also the light of His Knowledge, which knows what is best for the world and for each of its beings and things. To live in the psychic is to be in tune with the Divine Will and work in the unfaltering steps of Truth.

But how to discover and realise the psychic ? "How, you ask me, are we to know our true being ? Ask for it, aspire after it, *want it as you want nothing else*....All urges for perfection comes from it, but you are unaware of the source, you are not collaborating with it knowingly, you are not in identification with its light. Do not think that I refer to the emotional part of you when I speak of the psychic. Emotions belong to the higher vital, not to the pure psychic. The psychic is a steady flame that burns in you, soaring towards the Divine and carrying with it a sense of strength which breaks down all oppositions. When you are identified with it you have the feeling of the divine Truth —then you cannot help feeling also that the whole world is ignorantly walking on its head with its feet in the air."[1]

A constant and intense aspiration for the psychic, an ardent seeking for it at all times and in all that we do, and a simultaneous

[1] Words of the Mother—3rd Series

rejection of all desires and attachments and self-centred interests, is the best way to realise the psychic. Aspiration for the psychic is essentially an aspiration for the Divine, for the Divine dwells in the psychic, and our realisation of the psychic is the solitary gate of entry into the Presence of the Divine within us. "Concentrate in the heart. Enter into it; go within and deep and far, as far as you can. Gather all the strings of your consciousness that are spread abroad, roll them up and take a plunge and sink down. A fire is burning there, in the deep quietude of your heart. It is the divinity in you—your true being. Hear its voice, follow its dictates."[1] "In the depths of your consciousness is the psychic being, the temple of the Divine within you. This is the centre round which should come about the unification of all these divergent parts, all the contradictory movements of your being."[2]

It is to be noted here that one may concentrate above the crown of the head or between the eyebrows; or, one may directly concentrate on the idea of the divine immanence in the world. There are as many ways and objects of concentration as there are aspects and poises of the Divine. But for the full realisation of the psychic, there is but one way—concentration in the deepest depths of the being, a plunge into the fathomless cave of the heart. And it is also to be noted that the total psychic realisation is indispensable for a dynamic union with the Divine and the transformation of nature...."The central being lies in the heart and from the heart proceed all central movements—all dynamism and urge for transformation and power of realisation."[3]

Describing the most concrete and effective way in which the psychic can be discovered, the Mother says : "Very often at the beginning of sâdhanâ one has the impression as if the psychic being is shut up in a kind of shell or prison and it is that which prevents it from manifesting itself outside and coming into

[1] Words of the Mother
[2] ibid
[3] ibid

conscious and constant contact with the external consciousness, the surface being. In endeavouring to join with the psychic one feels exactly as if there was a wall in front which one must break through or there is a door which must be forced if one were to enter. If you can break through the wall, open the door, then the psychic being is freed and it can manifest itself externally.

"You sit in meditation before a closed door, as it were, heavy as a door of bronze. You sit still with a will that the door must open so that you may cross over to the other side. The entire concentration, the entire aspiration is gathered together and made to push and push against the door, push more and more with increasing energy until all on a sudden the door gives way and you enter thrown as it were into the light. It is a powerful, unforgettable experience : you go through a sudden and radical change of consciousness, with an illumination that completely seizes hold of you, giving you the sensation that you have become another person. This is a very concrete and effective way of entering in contact with one's psychic being."[1]

One remembers in this connection the teaching of the Christ : "Knock, and it shall be opened unto thee". It is the intense, unwavering sincerity of the will, the inflexible determination, the stubborn, indefatigable perseverance, *vyavasāyātmikā buddhi*, the indomitable courage and tireless patience with which the Buddha clove through the meshes of samskâras into the heart of Truth that are needed for the discovery and realisation of the psychic. One has to knock, and knock hard, and harder, till the door flies open, and the long-cherished treasure of our seeking stands gleaming before our eyes.

The Mother says that there is not one person in a million who has a conscious relation with his psychic being, even for a moment. "The psychic being can work from within, but,

[1] Bulletin of Physical Education

for the external being, in such an invisible and unconscious way as if it did not exist. In most cases, in almost all cases, in fact, the psychic being is asleep, as it were, not active at all, but in a kind of torpor."[1] "A very sustained effort is needed to become conscious of one's psychic being. You would be considered very fortunate if you succeeded in doing so after having put in thirty years of assiduous labour."[2]

The Mother says that when the intensity of loving aspiration reaches a flaming point, all of a sudden there takes place a reversal of consciousness, and one is no more what one was the moment before. "Everything changes in a second : you know, you are, you live, you see the unreality of what seemed so real." One may have to wait for this moment "through days and months and centuries." "But if you intensify your aspiration, the pressure becomes so great...that something veers round in your consciousness. Instead of being outside and trying to look inside, you are inside ; and as soon as you are inside, all changes absolutely, completely. All that seemed to you true, natural, normal, real, tangible, all, all immediately appears to you as very grotesque, extremely funny, quite unreal, quite absurd"[3]. You find yourself in the luminous depths of your being, reborn, as it were, into the unbanked light and peace and bliss of your eternal soul. "Yes, you have touched something that is supremely true and eternally beautiful, and that you never lose anymore."[4] It may be that you cannot always remain stably and securely poised in that experience. There may be occasional lapses into the old consciousness of ignorance, division and discord ; but something of the experience will always abide with you, and pull you out of the lapses and aberrations. "Once this reversal has happened, you can slip into the outer consciousness, you may, in dealing with others, fall back somewhat into their

[1] Bulletin of Physical Education
[2] ibid
[3] ibid
[4] ibid

ignorance and blindness; but always there will be something living, erect, that moves no more, until that thing enters everywhere, and the blindness disappears for ever."[1] The experience of the psychic is something crucial and decisive, unforgettable and indubitable. It changes the orientation of the being and gives it a new vision, a new outlook, and a new aim to pursue in life.

In no yoga the complete psychic realisation is so much insisted upon as in the Integral Yoga of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother; for, the secret of divine fulfilment lies in the psychic, and also the key to the transformation of nature. It is true that the supreme transforming power comes from the Supermind, but for the descent of the supramental power, it is essential that the psychic should purify and unify the whole nature and remould it in its own image. Psychic transformation, as Sri Aurobindo says, must precede the other two transformations, spiritual and supramental. Those schools of yoga which have as their aim an escape of the human soul from the material world into some state of Brahmic peace and silence, or into the rapt bliss of inner union and communion with the Divine, do not, as a rule, lay so much stress on a full and dynamic realisation of the psychic. According to them, the soul or the psychic has no mission here to fulfil, nor has it any necessity to transform the physical consciousness and nature of man. Such transformation is deemed rather utopian and impracticable. But for the Integral Yoga, which has as its sole object a dynamic union with the Divine and a divine transformation of the entire human consciousness and nature, a complete and dynamic realisation of the psychic and a resultant psychicisation of the whole being is an indispensable prerequisite. It may be argued that the realisation of the soul or the psychic is common to most forms of the spiritual sadhana, and that it is no special feature of the Integral Yoga. But what is actually realised in the other yogas does not necessarily lead to the discovery of the mission of the

[1] Bulletin of Physical Education

psychic or the transformation of the physical nature. One usually stops short at one phase of the psychic realisation, the phase of passive peace and silence, as does Sankhya and Jainism; or, one may proceed through it, by a deepening and widening of the consciousness of peace and silence, to the realisation of the universal and transcendent Brahman. There is another phase at which one also stops short—the phase of love and devotion for the Divine in the heart. One may intensify this phase and enjoy a blissful union and communion with the Divine. The truth of the matter is that usually one realises only the static aspect of the psychic, and not the dynamic; or, even before having a definite experience of the psychic, one may widen out into an experience of the Self, the silent, witness Purusha, detached from the working of nature and indifferent to it, *udāsīnavadāsīnaḥ*. There are different realisations possible, and unless we have a clear perception of their distinctive characteristics, we are likely to confound one with the other in our estimate of them, or lump them all together under the blanket term of self-realisation. Whatever that may be, we must not forget that the psychic has a specific mission to fulfil in the material world—it is the transformation of Matter, and the Epiphany of God in material life. It cannot, therefore, stop short at its own liberation, but securely established in it, must work for the fulfilment of its mission. Its progress lies along a road which is interminable, indeed, infinite. It has to prepare its nature in such a way that it may express better and better the Divine's Will and the splendour of its purpose on earth. "It is not merely a matter of ameliorating the world. There are people who clamour for change of government, social reform and philanthropic work, believing that they can thereby make the world better. We want a new world, a true world, an expression of the Truth-Consciousness. And it will be, it must be—and the sooner the better. It should not, however, be just a subjective change. The whole physical life must be transformed. The material world does not want a mere change of consciousness in us. It says in effect: 'You retire

into bliss, become luminous, have the divine knowledge; but that does not alter me. I still remain the hell I practically am!' The true change of consciousness is one that will change the physical conditions of the world and make it an entirely new creation."[1] And who will do it, if not the psychic? For, the psychic is the only channel through which the Truth-Consciousness and the Truth-Force can flow down into Matter and transform it. This work of the psychic must necessarily be long and chequered. We can call it the psychic's post-liberation progress in the material world. And this, indeed, is its raison d'être. Its mission is bound up with the earth. Its presence in the world is a pledge of the earth's deliverance and transformation, of the establishment of Light in the kingdom of darkness, of unity and harmony in the hurtling arena of divisions and discord, of blissful immortality in this undisputed empire of death and suffering.

When the psychic is realised, it is our second birth, we attain to *dwijattwa*, we step into Brahminhood. A new sense of universality, of illimitable expansion, of termless continuity develops in us. We find our existence infinitely enlarged, our consciousness illumined and extended beyond all horizons, our thoughts and feelings, delivered from their narrow moulds, embracing the whole world. "Then you decentralise, spread out, enlarge yourself; you begin to live in everything and in all beings; the barriers separating individuals from each other break down. You think in their thoughts, vibrate in their sensations, you feel in their feelings, you live in the life of all. What seemed inert suddenly becomes full of life, stones quicken, plants feel and will and suffer, animals speak in a language more or less inarticulate, but clear and expressive; everything is animated with a marvellous consciousness without time and limit. And this is only one aspect of the psychic realisation. There are many others. All combine in pulling you out of the barriers of your egoism,

[1] Words of the Mother

the walls of your external personality, the impotence of your reactions and the incapacity of your will."[1]

The psychic experience is, as I have said above, indubitable —it carries with it a sense of absolute certainty, of unchallengeable authenticity. One knows without doubt that one is immortal; that one has always existed and will never cease to exist; that one assumes different names and forms in different lives, passes through various experiences, and grows and profits by them all, but remains essentially the same—the same luminous being of love and bliss, infinite and immortal. And he who has realised his psychic means every letter of what he says when he asserts that no price is too heavy to pay for this sublime experience, no sacrifice, no renunciation, no tapasyâ too difficult to make. The experience is revolutionary. It unseals a new vision, initiates a new life of glorious possibilities, cuts at the roots of sorrow and suffering, and excises death out of one's existence for ever. It is the bridge to immortality, as the Upanishad puts it.

Will not man, in his present crisis, turn his gaze inwards and discover his psychic, his real self, the eternal fount of love and light, the living ocean of peace and power, the potential architect of the kingdom of God upon earth ?

RISHABHCHAND

[1] Sri Aurobindo and the Mother on Education

THE LIFE DIVINE

An Outline

Vol. II—Chapter XVI

The Integral Knowledge and the Aim of Life; Four Theories of Existence

AN integral knowledge must include truth of life and the aim of life. The evolutionary process is the development of a Truth of existence concealed in an original Inconscience, and manifesting through an emerging Consciousness. What is the nature of that Truth ?

An indefinable and ineffable Absolute is the origin, support and secret Reality of all things. There is, however, a spiritual consciousness, apart from mental thought, which can seize by identity that Reality, expressed in all things. All temporal and phenomenal realities—even that which deforms truth—have a basic reality of something that is eternal and true in the Absolute. The deformation is not essential but only contributory to the manifestation.

The Absolute manifests in two terms: a Being which is the fundamental reality, and a Becoming which is an effectual reality, a creative energy and working out of the Being. The Being is always present in the Becoming and cannot be separated from it, even to the very limits of the atom or matter's boundless extension. The Becoming must know itself as Being, through the soul's unity with the Absolute. This is the outcome of our Becoming and the aim of our existence, expressed as a necessity in the soul, an energy in matter, an urge in life, and a will, aim and endeavour through mind.

We accept the partial spiritual realisation as a step towards the integral. Illusionism results when we cut ourselves from the Becoming in order to experience the pure Absolute. But this is not the ultimate truth, for the Becoming is a real power of the Infinite. It is the soul in the Becoming that can know itself as the Being and possess the Becoming. This is the fulfilment of Being in its dynamic reality, and gives a full spiritual significance to the universe, as well as the soul in manifestation.

The Absolute in its supracosmic Reality as well as in its Becoming, is a three-fold Principle of Divine Existence, Consciousness and Delight of Being. All is a manifestation of That; and it dwells even in all. It is the hidden compulsion in all things to evolve the secret consciousness, and manifest the delight of existence even in Matter.

The Being is an infinite oneness which embraces an infinite multiplicity of itself. The One is All-Existence. The multiplicity of the One and the unity of the Many are two aspects of one reality. The Being presents itself to us in three poises; supracosmic Existence, cosmic Spirit, and individual Self in the Many. In the aspect of Multiplicity we see a division of consciousness, and a resultant Ignorance in the Many. But by the secret Unity, the soul is urged to grow out of the Ignorance and recover the one Divine Being. The individual thus becomes aware of itself in the universe, and the universe in itself, and at the same time aware of his supracosmic transcendence.

Our view of existence must include the Transcendence, as well as the cosmic Energy, in relation to the individual. We are not only a product of the universal Energy, but also a soul-being, a portion of the cosmic Spirit whose origin is in the Transcendence. Cosmic Being expresses itself through the individual being, but also the Transcendental Reality expresses itself through both the individual existence and the cosmos. We must not, therefore, see the universe only through the fragmentary individual consciousness; the spiritual individuality has the power

of embracing the whole universe in his consciousness. And both cosmos and individual must be seen to depend on the transcendental Divine Being.

The Divine Being is both impersonal and personal, the foundation of all existences; it is also the conscious Being of whom all beings are selves. The soul must grow into this truth of itself and become one with the Divine Being and Nature. It thus becomes an expression of the highest Truth, possessed by the Divine and moved by His Energy. We experience the real existence of God and the Soul, as well as the cosmic action of the Divine Energy. Through union of consciousness we realise the Divine Unity of God and Soul.

The manifestation of Being is an evolution which is based on an involution; Matter is the lowest level and Spirit the highest. In the involution there are seven grades of consciousness : the three original principles of the Divine Existence, Consciousness and Delight; and the fourth principle of supramental truth-consciousness, which together form the quadruple power of the upper hemisphere. Here there is complete freedom and knowledge. The three other principles—Mind, Life and Matter, —form the planes of being of the lower hemisphere. These lower principles are themselves powers of the higher; but separated from their spiritual source they create a state of limited knowledge, the cosmic and individual Ignorance.

The lowest descent into the material plane is a total Inconscience which is the totally involved ground for the evolutionary emergence. The evolution develops from a material universe which manifests Life; and then the powers of mind emerge which now point to the Supermind or Truth-Consciousness as the next stage of manifestation. It is Supermind that will manifest the Spirit's whole knowledge in a supramental living being. This is the plan and order of terrestrial evolution. Just as Mind, Life and Matter have become realised powers so Supermind and the triune aspects of Sachchidananda will be realised forms of the manifestations. This is the destiny of the

soul in the Becoming, a realisation in earth-life and Matter, which has even concealed within it the higher principles.

Mind is a creative principle, just as Life and Matter have in them a creative Energy. Mind is not the sole or supreme creative principle, and in the same way Life and Matter are expressions of an integral Truth. Matter at first seems to be the basis of all things, but it results from an Energy which is itself an action of a secret Consciousness and Being. Matter is not the original and ultimate reality, but it is a form and habitation of Spirit for its realisation.

Life when it emerges, also becomes dominant. But it is a form or power of the original Reality, acting as a creative urge in Matter. Life is a dynamic mould into which we have to pour the Divine Existence. The Life-principle is not the origin of things. It must know itself as an energy of the Divine Being, and its action elevated into a channel for the outpourings of the superior Nature.

Mind also, when it emerges, becomes dominant and uses Life and Matter as a means of its expression. Yet Mind, an outcome of the Overmind or shadow of the divine Supermind, is also a limited and derivative power. It can arrive at its own perfection by admitting the light of a larger knowledge, and thus transform its ignorant and imperfect powers into effective potencies of the supramental truth-consciousness. All the powers of the lower hemisphere can only transform themselves through the light that descends from the higher hemisphere.

The Inconscient seems to be the support and origin of these three lower powers, since they are dominated by it. The Inconscient is the starting-point of the evolution, but a conscious Spirit is by degrees emerging from it, through the penetration of higher powers of being. The limitations of our material substance are thus diminished, so that it can possess the greater law of divine Consciousness, Energy and Spirit. All truths are admitted as valid in their own field; but their limitations have to be eliminated and partial truths reconciled in a larger truth.

From this point of view we have now to regard the metaphysical knowledge built up towards the fundamental truth of existence. Such metaphysical knowledge, which traces the fundamental principles of being, must be the basis on which our own process of life, its aim and method should be directed. Such a truth must be realisable both in our inner being and our outer activities. If not, it is an abstract unreality. Therefore the fundamental truth of existence must also be the aim and meaning of our own life and ideal.

There are four main theories concerning the truth of existence; supracosmic, cosmic and terrestrial, supraterrestrial or otherworldly, and the integral or composite. This latter means that our existence is a Becoming with the Divine Being as its origin and object. But first we must review the other three, and see where they depart from the integral view.

In the supracosmic view the supreme Reality is alone entirely real. Both cosmic existence and individual being would then not be essential or indispensable. Human existence would have no real meaning; life itself would be an error or an ignorance. The one thing then would be to escape from life. Only so long as we remain in that error are the laws of life binding upon us. From this viewpoint the most direct way to self-knlowledge is to reach Nirvana, with the extinction of the individual and the universal. This is the Buddhistic ideal, and it has also come into Vedanta.

In the original Vedanta, the Becoming is accepted as a reality; but yet it is a termporal reality, and the soul must sooner or later transcend it. Thus the world is a temporary play of becoming with an inherent will and delight. But the individual here has no fundamental reality, although the universe may be persistent in a timeless existence. Is a personal eternity an error of our ignorant surface consciousness, since all values are relative and temporary against the absolute Existence ? This however, does not satisfy the demand for individual perfection.

The cosmic-terrestrial view, which considers cosmic existence

as alone real, is the opposite of the supracosmic view. God or Nature can only be then an eternal Becoming. Earth is but one field and man one of the temporary forms of the Becoming. Mankind itself may be only of short duration in the earth's existence; the solar system itself may one day cease to be a productive factor in the Becoming; and the universe may dissolve into its original Energy. We might suppose, however, that a soul, or psychic entity, persists in time with or without after-life. This might mean either a growth towards perfection or liberation in an endless Becoming. This, however, assumes a greater supra-terrestrial existence.

If man is limited to this sole terrestrial life, then his chief pursuit is to study the laws of the Becoming and to realise its potentialities in himself or for the race of which he is a member. The individual in this respect is limited; only by a collective effort can this endeavour be brought into full effect. Here the individual has to make the best use of the brief space of life allotted to him for the betterment of the collectivity. He accepts the welfare of humanity as the natural limits for the earthly aim of life. In this way the collective life enlarges. Alternatively the individual man stresses his own perfection as the most fitting means of progress.

The supraterrestrial view, on the other hand not only admits the reality of the material cosmos but accepts other world or planes of existence which may have a more permanent duration than the earthly. It perceives an immortal soul behind the mortality of bodily life, and it is this immortality that gives a wider conception of life. From this point of view it seems that the true home of man is beyond this earthly life which is but an episode towards his immortality, or a temporary fall from it.

Certain religious beliefs are based on the idea that man has been created as a living body into which a new divine soul is breathed, and that this life is his one opportunity, from which he departs to a world of eternal bliss or eternal misery, according to his own action or a divine action. It may also be seen that

the soul has to pursue a greater life in a supraterrestrial existence. Or there may have been a pre-terrestrial existence of the soul, with its fall or descent into matter, and its reascension into the heavenly being.

If the earth life is only a stage or an interlude in the soul's development, then this life may be regarded as an ordeal, or the scene of spiritual fall and exile, or even merely as a field of the divine Play. In any case, the soul is destined to reascend at last to its proper plane. In all these varying ideas there are three essential characteristics; the belief in individual immortality, the idea of the soul's sojourn on earth as a temporary passage towards a higher heaven, and an emphasis on the development of the ethical and spiritual being as the proper means of ascension beyond the material plane.

There are three fundamental ways of viewing our existence; but our practical life is usually a confused amalgam of two or more of them, with perhaps an attempt at synthesis. The major part of one's energies are inevitably devoted to earthly needs and ideals of the individual and the race. The pursuit of the higher ideals of human perfection are part of man's natural growth to full manhood. It is a necessary part of the evolution that man's earth life—his material, vital and mental development—be given its complete fulfilment.

There is also something in man which goes beyond the present terrestrial nature of humanity. There is a soul in us, which is other and greater than mind, life and body. Mostly man devotes only exceptional movements to the soul, but a complete turning to the soul-life may, on the other hand, lead to a diminishing of earthly living and a cherishing of the supraterrestrial aim of life. This supraterrestrial view has had a powerful influence at certain epochs. But it ignores the law of man's evolutionary capacity.

As our mental life deepens we perceive that there is something supracosmic, beyond both terrestrial and supraterrestrial existence. It may result from an eagerness of our will to reach

the Highest, or a disgust with and a turning away from life. All else than the Supreme seems then unreal. This view, however, induces a restless dissatisfaction with life, narrowing and belittling the life-motives. But we then cut off our natural response to the Divine Being's larger joy in cosmic existence, creating a negative opposition towards the divine Creation.

We have to put human nature in its right place in the cosmic movement, or rather give the proper value to each part of our composite being, discovering the key to their unity as well as their difference. This means an integration or an evolutionary synthesis. In ancient Indian culture four human needs were taken into account : man's vital interests and needs, his desires, his ethical and religious being, and his spiritual longing for the Beyond. There was a period of normal living to satisfy human desires and interests, moderated by the ethical and religious ideals ; there was a period of withdrawal and spiritual preparation ; and last a period of renunciation of life and release into the spirit. All this could only be done through a long succession of rebirths. This synthesis did much to raise the tone of human life, but it failed because its exaggeration of the impulse of renunciation cut the life-movement into two opposing parts. If there is no higher aim than escape from life, then life cannot have a divine significance. The two parts of our nature, the spiritual and the mundane, cannot then be reconciled.

The link here is a spiritual evolution, which makes human life the means for the unfolding of the Being in man's earthly life. But this can only be effected when the lower consciousness of mind, life and body are not rejected but are taken up and transformed by the light and power of the higher spiritual consciousness. The terrestrial ideal places man and the earth-life in a prominent position, but taken exclusively it has limited man's scope in reaching the highest. For mind is not the highest, but only a partial unfolding of consciousness ; and there are powers beyond which Nature, through man, is capable of attaining.

Mind and life cannot grow into their fullness until they open up to a larger and greater consciousness, which is spiritual. It is universal as well as transcendent, and has a capacity for knowledge and power. This is what our mind, life and body are seeking as their highest consummation. If we cut off all that has been evolved we reduce the Ignorance to a meaningless cycle, and moreover we cannot attain the wider and higher realisation of oneness, the larger integration of all the steps of Nature.

In this integration the supracosmic Reality is the supreme Truth; but this highest Reality is also the cosmic being and consciousness and life. Cosmic being is not meaningless or a chance error. A perfect self-expression of the spirit is the object of our terrestrial existence. Through our consciousness of the Supreme, we arrive at our own absolute. This does not exclude the cosmic Reality; we must become universal and thus fulfil our individuality, the greater wholeness of self in the cosmic completeness. Thus is the unity of the transcendent, the universal and the individual established, where the universe is the field, and the individual the active centre for unfolding the fullness of the self-expressing Spirit. It is the secret soul that must awake to its own oneness, in the universality and in the transcendence.

The material is not the only plane of our existence; there are other planes of consciousness to which we are secretly linked. We have to know and manifest the law of these planes in our own being, not as worlds apart from the earth, but realising their possibilities in this world. For earth-life is not something undivine, to be cast away, but the scene of the evolutionary unfolding of being, towards the revelation of a supreme spiritual light and power. This is the purpose and divine plan which is working itself out in the terrestrial creation.

While the soul can experience the worlds of a greater consciousness beyond the earth, it is also true that the power of these worlds can develop in this world. All these powers including the terrestrial, are a becoming of the One Reality; and this becoming has to embody in itself these diverse powers. This

divine potentiality in the present imperfect humanity is now veiled; but what we secretly are has to be increasingly manifested. The individual has to enter into greater planes of being, in the light of the Supreme, in order to use his world divinely.

The evolution of mind, life and spirit in Matter is the sign of this integration. A complete integration of Spirit and its evolutionary self-unfolding are the double term of our material existence. There are no fixed and perfect types in the evolutionary becoming, as there are in the typal worlds. The principle of becoming in this universe is a progressive self-discovery of that which had been originally concealed in Matter.

The involution of spirit in the Inconscience is the beginning; and the partial development of knowledge, the evolution in the Ignorance, is the middle, or this present stage. Our imperfection is the sign of a transitional state. The emergence of the spirit's self-knowledge and self-power of its divine being and consciousness is the final stage, the complete evolution of consciousness out of the present partial consciousness. This is the divinised life for which earth-nature is seeking. This is the divine intention in the Becoming here, the revelation of Being in a perfect Becoming.

N. PEARSON

REVIEW

'Bande Mataram' and Indian Nationalism by *Prof. Haridas Mukherjee and Prof. Uma Mukherjee.* Publishers : Firma K.L. Mukhopadhaya, 6/1-A, Banchharam Akrur Lane, Calcutta-12 ; pp. 96 ; price Rs. 2.50.

The spiritual factor in the early phase of the Freedom Movement in India has yet to be properly appraised ; it was really the great source of those dynamic forces that gave the movement its soul and sustained it towards the attainment of its objective. It is this psychological process more than anything else that created in the mind and heart of the Indian people the will to freedom, the determination to win through at any cost. This was the great aim of Sri Aurobindo, the highpriest of the revolutionary nationalism ; we have it from him that he left politics not only because he received the divine command to do so and take to Yoga but also because he found the people developing this will and showing marked signs of their determination to give it some form. And who will doubt that these earnest endeavours of an awakened people moved the national being of India till she attained her freedom ?

The remote origin of this spiritual factor in Indian politics can be traced to the not-always-known sources associated with the sadhana of a long line of saints and Yogis of whom a most glorious example was Ramdas who gave to Shivaji not a little of that strength by which he threw off the Muslim yoke. Evidences are now available that such efforts had been there right from the beginning of Muslim invasion. The rise of the Rajputs, the Marathas and the Sikhs had behind them the powerful inspiration of spiritual masters. The why of these efforts of Yogis to liberate India from foreign domination has in it a secret meaning which unveils itself to those who know the truth that India is,

the truth as well of her historic development down the ages, guided by the evolutionary Force so that India might prepare herself for the great work she is destined to do for the spiritual regeneration of the human race. The inner intention in such efforts was to achieve the outer aim of freedom, so necessary to the revival of spirituality by which alone could the race recover its true self, its true religion, its real strength of spirit, and by all these, fulfil its divine mission on earth. An understanding of this relation between India's freedom and her spiritual mission can explain why Yogis had ever made it a part of their *tapasya* to work for the removal of all external shackles from over the body-politic of their motherland who, to them, was a divine Shakti, "the Infinite and Compassionate Mother of man".

Her long practice of the Tantrik cult was one of the reasons for Bengal to be chosen by "the Shakti of India as her first workshop" in modern times. That this cult was widely prevalent in the last quarter of the eighteenth century was evident from the so-called "Sannyasi Rebellion" organised by monks who were devoted worshippers of the Divine Mother. Bankimchandra gave a vivid picture of this significant movement in his famous *Anandamath*, 'The Abbey of Bliss'. The occasion that led him to write it was the mantra *Bande Mataram* seen by Bankim a couple of years before the publication of the novel. But years before this vision came to him, Bankimchandra as "Kamalakanta" had perceived the Divine as Mother Durga and with tears in his eyes called upon his countrymen "to take a plunge into the dark current of Time and reclaim the golden image of the Mother and install her in our hearts". This was the Infinite Mother worshipped by her children in *Anandamath*, whose mantra of worship was *Bande Mataram*.

The wonder that this mantra wrought in the rise and growth of Indian Nationalism remains yet to be realised and given its proper place in the history of the Freedom Movement. The mantra found its inspired highpriest in Sri Aurobindo who in-

voked the Mother with the rapt cry of his soul, re-visioned Her in Her heavenly glory and proclaimed that glory in whatever he said and did and wrote in those great days when Bengal led India to the path of revolutionary nationalism, holding up before the country the Mother as she had been, the Mother as she was, the Mother as she would be, reenthroned in all her majesty as the Mother of the world. Indeed it was this vision that inspired the youths of the land to dedicate themselves to the cause of their country's freedom, the vision that heralded the dawn of a new light of heaven, a light in which they saw the glory that India the Mother was to be. And what a dawn it was ! Rightly and often are quoted in reference to those days the words of the English poet uttered about another great Revolution :

> Bliss was it in that time to be alive ;
> But to be young was very heaven.

This was the origin of the song that "in a single day converted the whole people to the religion of patriotism". "The Mother had revealed herself," wrote Sri Aurobindo. "Once that vision has come to the people, there can be no rest, no peace, no further slumber till the temple has been made ready, the image installed and the sacrifice offered. A great nation which has had that vision can never again bind its neck in submission to the yoke of a conqueror." "In the enthusiasm" to quote Sri Aurobindo again, "that swept surging everywhere with the cry of *Bande Mataram* ringing on all sides men felt it glorious to be alive and dare and act together and hope; the old apathy and timidity were broken and a force was created which nothing could destroy and which rose again and again, in wave after wave, till it carried India to the beginning of a victory."

These are the thoughts prompted by the book under review. Blessed is the moment when Bepinchandra Pal fixed upon this mighty mantra as the title of his paper started to propagate the new ideas of nationalism then stirring the mind and heart and

soul of those Indians who opened to the gleamings of the dawn bursting on the horizon. And to this dawn Sri Aurobindo pointed with his finger of light. He joined Bepinchandra Pal as a leader-writer of the *Bande Mataram* soon after the paper was started. The *Bande Mataram* was indeed a unique episode in the history of Indian journalism .It was then the only Indian paper,—the other in Bengali being the *Yugantar* started by Sri Aurobindo,—which propounded in inspired and inspiring words a new philosophy and a new thought and thereby became the only authentic voice of India's national aspirations. Soon it set aflame the hearts of our youths and many of the best among them left hearth and home and joined the revolutionary centres started under Sri Aurobindo's leadership. Upendranath Bandyopadhyaya, an active member of the famous Maniktala centre, writes in his *Memoirs of a Revolutionary* that he was drawn to the revolutionary work by words like "We want absolute autonomy free from British control". This demand was repeated by Sri Aurobindo in a series of articles published in the *Bande Mataram* on the eve of the Calcutta Session of the Indian National Congress in December 1906. The *Bande Mataram* was the first to declare openly that the political goal of India was complete independence. In that series Sri Aurobindo not only explained the newly evolved programme of the Nationalist Party but emphasised that the Congress must adopt that programme as one of the most effective means to attain its goal.

The book under review is a helpful and invaluable contribution to the study and understanding of the forces at work behind the Swadeshi Movement, and to the authors are due the grateful thanks of their countrymen. Dr. Surendra Nath Sen, the famous historian, writes a *Foreword* to the book. About two-thirds of its pages are given to a selection of the leading articles mainly from the weekly edition of the *Bande Mataram* that began to be published from June 2, 1907, the daily edition having been brought out in August 1906. Excepting the last two articles which are from the pen of Bepinchandra Pal, all of them are by Sri Aurobindo.

A clearer picture of what the *Bande Mataram* did for the growth of India's national consciousness, and how it voiced the aspirations of India, would be possible to visualise today if a selection of the leading articles from its very start was available. Anyway, the present book does give an idea of the splendid services the *Bande Mataram* rendered to the cause of India's Freedom. In the first part of the book, a third of its total size, the authors trace the history of *Bande Mataram* as a song and with copious quotations from the paper try to assess its ideals and principles and how it sought to propagate them. They are without doubt of great value as facts of history.

It is not possible, however, to agree with the authors that much of Bankimchandra's greatness as an exponent of the new national idealism was due to the influence on him of Auguste Comte. It is true that like all progressive Indians of his time, educated in the English way, Bankimchandra also was open to Western ideas which he admired and wanted his countrymen to imbibe as a necessary corrective to all sorts of unreason and untruth then corroding the national life and obstructing progress. But this was only one side of Bankimchandra's mind. There was certainly the other which he later developed to a remarkable definitiveness when he made a thorough study of the ancient Indian ideas through Sanskrit texts. And this he did with the help of his father and under his inspiration. In his article on Bankim in the *Bhadra*, 1332 (Bengali era) issue of the now defunct Bengali monthly *Narayana* (edited by Chittaranjan Das), Purnachandra Chattopadhyaya, Bankim's younger brother, gave an authentic account of how Bankim was initiated by his father into the sublimities of his country's cultural heritage and how within three years after the death of his father in 1881, Bankim published three of his best novels, *Anandamath*, *Devi Chaudhurani* and *Sitaram*. He dedicated his second novel to his father from whom, he said, he learnt *nishkama dharma*, disinterested way of life, the key note of that novel and one of the central teachings of the Bhagvad Gita, on which also Bankim wrote a series of

articles. It cannot, therefore, be said that Bankim's humanitarian ideal was entirely Comtist in its inspiration. Neither is acceptable Benoykumar Sarkar's view, quoted by the authors, that '*Bande Mataram* is a Comtist hymn.'

Sir Gurudas Bandyopadhayaya, the great scholar and jurist, was the first to call Bankim a Rishi; Sri Aurobindo corroborated Gurudas in revealing words; Hemendraprasad Ghosh, the eminent publicist and a member of the editorial board of the *Bande Mataram*, spoke of Bankim in a similar vein; all of them using the word Rishi in its ancient connotation—a seer and revealer of an eternal truth. Bankim did appreciate Comte's humanitarianism but the spiritual basis he gave to it was his own, for he saw the Infinite Mother upbearing the evolution of man towards his high destiny. And this vision attained its fullness when he saw in his own country, "the golden image" of the Mother. This depth of insight gave Bankim the power of the Word by which, says Sri Aurobindo, he "made a nation".

We welcome this useful publication and wish it a wide circulation. It is, however, our hope that an attempt will, before long, be made to collect all the leading articles of the daily *Bande Mataram* from its start till June 1907, and bring out in book form those among them which are of historical value.

The present collection, however, is not the first of its kind. The Swaraj Publishing House, Benares, published in 1922, selections from the *Bande Mataram* which conclude with "The Morality of Boycott" written by Sri Aurobindo for the *Bande Mataram* but which could not be published because of his arrest on May 2, 1908. A few extracts from the article are given below as they reflect the ideal of Mother-worship conceived by Sri Aurobindo, and as they point to the central ideal of the *Bande Mataram* :

"A poet of sweetness and love, who has done much to awaken Bengal, deprecates the boycott as an act of hate....In reality the boycott is not an act of hate. It is an act of self-defence, of

aggression for the sake of self-preservation. To call it an act of hate is to say that a man who is being slowly murdered, is not justified in striking his murderer....Politics is the ideal of the Kshatriya, and the morality of the Kshatriya ought to govern our political actions. To impose in politics the Brahmanical duty of saintly sufferance is to preach *varnasankara.*

"Love has a place in politics, but it is the love of one's country, for one's countrymen, for the glory, greatness and happiness of the race, the divine *ananda* of self-immolation for one's fellows, the ecstasy of relieving their sufferings, the joy of seeing one's blood flow for country and freedom, the bliss of union in death with the fathers of the race. The feeling of almost physical delight in the touch of the mother-soil, of the winds that blow from Indian seas, of the rivers that stream from Indian hills, in the hearing of Indian speech, music, poetry, in the familiar sights, sounds, habits, dress, manners of Indian life, this is the physical root of that love. The pride in our past, the pain of our present, the passion for the future are its trunk and branches. Self-sacrifice and self-forgetfulness, great service, high endurance for the country are its fruit. And the sap which keeps it alive is the realisation of the Motherhood of God in the country, the vision of the Mother, the knowledge of the Mother, the perpetual contemplation, adoration and service of the Mother."

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